



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

PO Box 700

TRENTON, NJ 08625-0700

RICHARD J. CODEY
Acting Governor

JAMES M. DAVY
Commissioner

September 2005

Dear Colleagues:

In June 2004, the State of New Jersey began implementation of a historic Child Welfare Reform Plan which is part of the court approved settlement of the federal class action against the state. The goal of the plan is to create a comprehensive child welfare system that provides necessary child welfare services in a seamless and coordinated fashion to the children and families of New Jersey. As part of our child welfare reform efforts, the New Jersey Departments of Education (DOE) and Human Services (DHS) are working in collaboration in several significant areas.

The Child Welfare Reform Plan is designed to strengthen collaboration among all stakeholders as they respond to the needs of families in crisis and enhance prevention services available to children and families before a child protection crisis occurs. New Jersey's school and district personnel are important partners in the protection of children from abuse and neglect. Similarly, child welfare workers and foster/resource families also have an important role to play in supporting the academic success of children being served by the child welfare system.

When a child must enter out-of-home placement, e.g. foster care, a group home or other residential placement being in school provides structure, stability and normalcy in the midst of uncertainty. To this end, the Child Welfare Reform Plan, requires that all reasonable steps be taken to ensure that these students are registered for and attending school within 72 hours of out-of-home placement. DOE and DHS have prepared a joint publication to facilitate enrollment of children when they enter out-of-home care. This brochure, "How to Register a Child in Out-of-Home Care for School," will help superintendents, principals and school registrars, along with child welfare caseworkers and foster/resource parents know exactly what is necessary to expedite school registration and ensure the child's placement in the appropriate educational setting.

Please read this brochure and incorporate the information as you work with children in out-of-home care settings. Also share it with colleagues and others, who may need this information. More copies of the brochure are available from your DOE county superintendent or can be downloaded by going to: <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ocs/ecp.html>.

As partners who provide for the education and protection of New Jersey's children, we will continue our work together to support access to a stable and quality education for all of New Jersey's children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James M. Davy".

James M. Davy
Commissioner
Department of Human Services

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lucille Davy".

Lucille Davy
Acting Commissioner
Department of Education